

## **V. A Vision for Montana Preservation 2003-2007: Goals and Objectives**

### ***Vision***

The vision for historic preservation in Montana, and thereby the mission of the State Historic Preservation Office, over the next five years (2003 – 2007) is:

***Working together with all Montanans to preserve our state's significant historic, prehistoric and traditional cultural places.***

### ***Principles, Policies and Practices***

The following principles, policies, and practices derive from discussions and experience gained during the present planning process. Together, they can form the basis for strategic efforts in preservation in Montana.

***Working together:*** In a state as large as Montana with a population so small, it is imperative that historic preservation be undertaken in an environment of cooperation. Working together is not only beneficial; it is a necessity. People and resources, including information, must be pooled and shared. Issues cannot be allowed to become polarized: development can be made responsive to historic preservation and preservation, in turn, can accommodate development. Working together occurs across all levels from national to local and private to public. As many significant historic resources are owned privately or held in trust for all Americans, historic preservation is best, if not only, achieved through cooperation.

***Actions speak louder than words:*** Individual Montanans enjoy a high level of access to decision-makers and are accustomed to having their say. Consequently, a premium is placed upon tangible results, rather than simply discourse, as the true measure of success. In historic preservation it is insufficient to appeal to the higher values of preservation if those values cannot be or are not realized pragmatically. Historic preservation in Montana must be demonstrable in order to succeed and prosper.

***Good information leads to good decision-making:*** Historic preservation relies on up-to-date, comprehensive information in all its steps from identification and evaluation to mitigation and treatment. The importance of obtaining the necessary data, both new and existing, to making an appropriate decision cannot be overstated. Moreover, as this information about resources and how to address them is constantly growing and evolving, it is equally vital that a system for organizing and retrieving information is in place at the state level. Ideally, all interested parties should have access to the same information.

***All preservation is not local:*** Appealing as it may be to think that local contexts, needs and decisions determine historic preservation – and sometimes they do – such a view

does not give sufficient acknowledgement to the role of the state and the nation in serving as a clearinghouse for information and guidance in historic preservation. This State Plan, the state inventory of recorded cultural properties, the National Register of Historic Places, the SHPO library of previous cultural inventory and investigations, as well as guidance interpreted and made accessible through SHPO from the National Park Service, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and other national organizations are all important to making sense of and preserving historic properties. Many state and federal agencies, particularly land-managing agencies, are also strongly invested in historic preservation policies and practices, both through purpose and regulation. Historic buildings and archaeological sites in public ownership belong to more than those who live in proximity to them and must be managed accordingly with the greater public interest in mind.

***Pro-active comes before Re-active:*** Historic preservation under fire or in the face of conflict seldom yields the best results. Some crises are inevitable, but these should not be the norm. Agencies and organizations need to incorporate preservation early into the planning and decision-making process before options have been limited. Individuals and businesses must be educated to considering meaningful alternatives that favor preservation. The ongoing proactive inventory and recognition of significant historic properties and the explanation of what they mean is often the best means for ensuring their long-term care and preservation.

***Plan to planning:*** Most comprehensive Plans – even good ones – are under-utilized. Important in the making, they are soon forgotten - relegated to the proverbial shelf. No-one should expect all actions to make reference to something so general as a State Plan; however, properly used, most prioritizing and significant actions should be able to draw upon and be consistent with the information and ideas expressed in the Plan. Equally important, planning (with a little "p") can and should be applied to all preservation efforts. Planning is more than the implementation of the Plan. There are far too many aspects of preservation to include all of them in a Plan and information is also constantly increasing and evolving. Good planning makes reference to the most applicable guidance and the most current data, not only that embodied in a Plan. Much like context development, planning requires active participation, original research, and thought - not merely reference to a pre-set body of work.

### ***Goals & Objectives***

The goals and objectives on the following page will provide guidance for historic preservation in Montana over the next five years. They derive from and reflect the input, resource assessments, issues and policies identified in the current planning process and presented in this Plan. While providing direction for the annual actions of the State Historic Preservation Office over the next five years, these goals and objectives are also presented for the state as a whole in achieving a vision for historic preservation of:

***Working together with all Montanans to preserve our state's significant historic, prehistoric and traditional cultural places.***

## **Montana Preservation Goals and Objectives 2003 - 2007**

### **Goal I. Foster a preservation ethic for Montana's heritage properties**

#### ***Objectives:***

1. Instill an awareness and appreciation for Montana's heritage and heritage properties.
2. Encourage the integration of historic preservation in planning and policy-making.
3. Promote the cultural, social, and economic benefits of historic preservation.
4. Provide leadership and vision in historic preservation.

### **Goal II. Identify, evaluate, and recognize Montana's heritage properties**

#### ***Objectives:***

1. Survey or support the survey of un-inventoried properties throughout the state.
2. Guide the development and use of historical contexts for evaluating the significance and integrity of Montana's prehistoric, historic, and cultural sites.
3. Encourage and assist owners to list properties in the National Register of Historic Places.

### **Goal III. Create and support a statewide comprehensive source for information about Montana's heritage properties and historic preservation**

#### ***Objectives:***

1. Acquire, organize, and share data on the state's prehistoric, historic, and traditional cultural sites.
2. Gather, develop, and disseminate historic preservation guidance and standards.
3. Identify financial and human resources to assist preservation.

### **Goal IV. Encourage the involvement of Montana's tribes in historic preservation**

#### ***Objectives:***

1. Meet regularly with tribal cultural representatives to discuss issues and concerns.
2. Sponsor or co-sponsor forums that include Native Americans.
3. Facilitate the consideration of tribal perspectives regarding the treatment of heritage properties.

### **Goal V. Work effectively with all agencies, organizations, and individuals for good stewardship and sensitive treatment of Montana's heritage properties**

#### ***Objectives:***

1. Effectively apply historic preservation programs, strategies, techniques, laws, and information to the preservation of Montana's heritage properties.
2. Solidify existing partnerships and form new consensus for the benefit of historic preservation.
3. Strengthen local and private efforts to preserve.
4. Develop and support special programs for the preservation of resources at risk.